Wildland Mobile Technologies Working Group
Briefing Paper

Date 3 March 2014

Topic: Final consolidated responses from the Fire and Aviation Management community information assessment on mobile technology

Intent: Increase WMTWG and coordinating partners' situational awareness of field needs and technology use within the fire and aviation management community by providing national broad and supported direct feedback from the users.

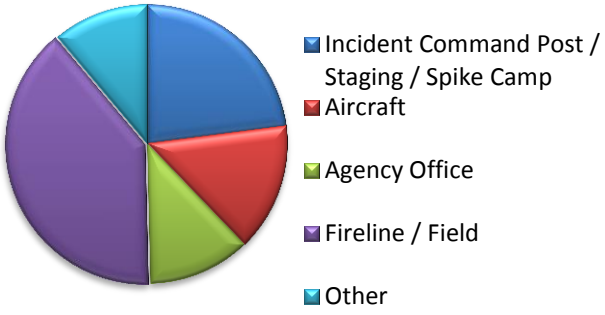
Background: The goal of this informal request for information was to compile direct feedback from the user community regarding mobile technology. Final feedback will help determine user requirements, define improvement areas for the benefit of fire and aviation management and assist with WFIT Board with prioritization.

Key Points:

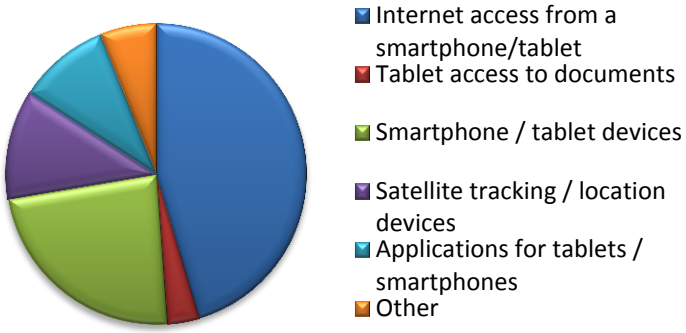
Total Number of Responses: 271

The interagency fire community was the target audience for this information request. Responses were accepted for a period of three months. The graphs and information presented below are a representation of the primary user community usage of mobile devices and the recommended actions to address the identified user community needs. This feedback specifically focused on mobile technologies and did not evaluate all communication methods within fire operations (e.g. radio).

Primary location of mobile device use



Aspect that most benefited job effectiveness



Primary Fire Operations Usage Feedback:

- Downloading and viewing map data
- Access to local area data for increased SA
- Accessing maps, IAP's, forms through QR codes
- Obtaining and submitting weather forecasts

- Completing and submitting ICS Forms
- Posting information to social media sites
- Remote briefings for spike camps
- Increased SA for incoming resources who can load data prior to arrival to an incident
- Disseminating fire information
- Viewing structure protection plans
- Using mapping applications to determine land status/ownership

Aviation Specific Usage Feedback

- Sharing information with ground resources, near real time video and photos
- Retardant avoidance planning
- MODIS Tracking of large fires
- Utilizing tablets for digital flight bags vs. paper flight bags
- Completion and dissemination of daily ICS forms
- Downloading and completing aviation inspection forms
- Automated Flight Following
- Tracking weather for mission planning/situational awareness
- GPS capabilities where cell reception is unavailable
- Accessing aviation sectional maps

Administrative Duties Usage Feedback

- Travel- GovTrip access, reserving hotels, reconciling travel documentation, tracking per diem
- Checking agency email, calendars and accessing contacts
- Scanning of documents for administrative needs
- GoTo Meeting attendance
- HR Documentation-Completing CA-1 forms while travelling, completing and approving timesheets
- Enterprise Application Access- WFDSS, ROSS
- Utilizing phones and tablets as hotspots while travelling

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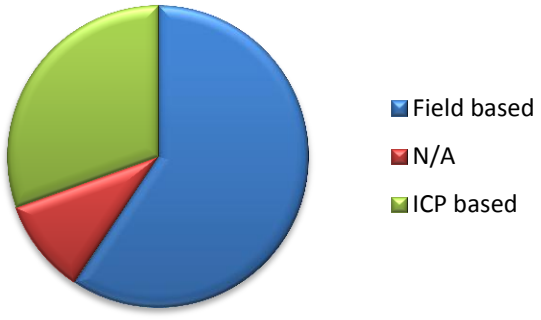
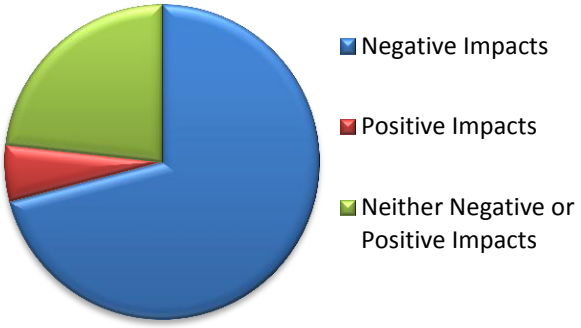
Limited Connectivity Impact Feedback

- Creating additional radio traffic for weather/RAWS data
- Limited data sharing with ground resources
- Additional risk involved with increased daily travel
- Limited communication with resources that are not on the radio system –public, elected officials, agencies, media
- Situational awareness is decreased when communications are limited to radio traffic only
- Inability to obtain fire behavior models and real time weather
- Difficulty ordering supplies for resources
- Delays contact with home unit, hindering capacity for decisions
- PIO's reduced ability to disseminate incident information, provide social media updates
- Limited capability to transmit spatial data
- Limited capability to access financial documents needed for contracts
- Real time data provided to ICP decreased
- Increased reliance on local dispatch for updated fire data and to pass messages along to necessary resources
- Increased mitigation planning to address safety concerns
- Inability to access enterprise Fire Application Systems
- Inability to track aircraft
- Delay with entering time and travel documents

Positions impacted by limited connectivity



Impact of limited connectivity (speed/signal) on position performance



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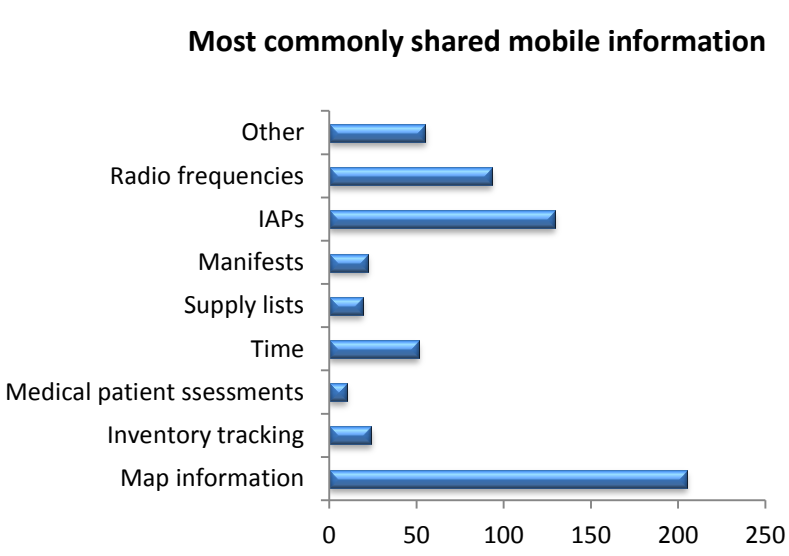
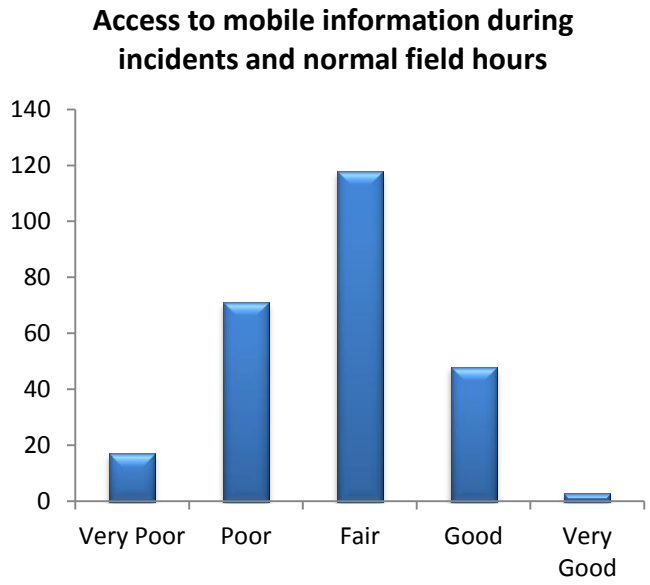
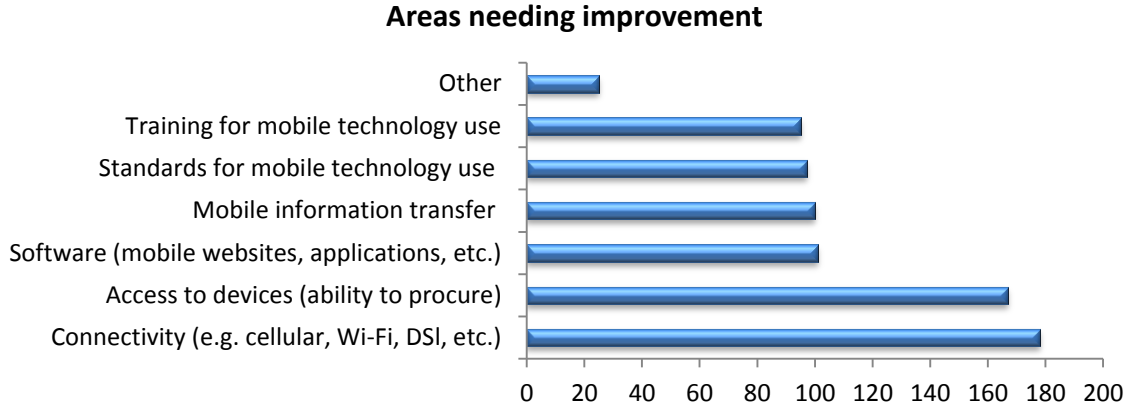




Recommended Actions:

- Prioritize development of interagency cloud solution for secure file transfer services to increase mobile capabilities for data consumption and sharing
- Recommend Forest Service ELT increase purchase allotment for Forest Service mobile devices
- Prioritize development of standard platform for accessing commonly used interagency Fire Management forms
- Increase awareness of interagency BYOD results and processes once available
- Address mobile application needs with all fire application development projects



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